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ABSTRACT

The status of desegregation in 50 large American cities is examined along with state policy which affects this status. Desegregation in 17 cities with full scale desegregation is operating peacefully. The 18 moderately desegregated cities are in a state of flux. State activity on behalf of essentially desegregated cities is most evident in these cities. The cities presently involved in litigation will be moderately desegregated in the near future. The direction of movement is toward desegregation in cities. Another discussion in this document includes a historical and community analysis of the desegregation experiences of School District 151 in Chicago. (Author/AM)

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The Status of Desegregation in American Cities: Implications for the State Role[1]

Meyer Weinberg

With four of every five Americans living in cities, urban school desegregation is very nearly the same as national desegregation. Yet, only a decade or so ago, it was frequently assumed by commentators that schools in the larger cities were immune to desegregation. Today, however, we know otherwise. Urban school desegregation is a growing reality.

What is the present status of desegregation in American cities? Unfortunately, both federally- and privately-supported research has neglected to deal with this important question. Accordingly, one cannot do more than indicate the dimensions of desegregation in a selected set of cities.

The 50 largest cities, in terms of population, can be located in one of five categories of desegregation: (1) full-scale desegregation, (2) moderately desegregated, (3) essentially segregated, (4) presently involved in litigation, and (5) scheduled to implement a court order. Numerically, the distribution is as follows:

Category 1	17 cities
Category 2	18 cities
Category 3	9 cities
Category 4	4 cities
Category 5	2 cities

Almost certainly the four cities presently in Category 4 will shift to Category 1 while the two in Category 5 will soon also end up there. Essentially, then, Category 1 may include 23 of the 50 cities.

1. Presented at the November 18, 1977 meeting of the National Project and Task Force on Desegregation Strategies, co-sponsored by the Educational Commission of the States, the National Association of State School Boards, and the Council of the Chief School Officers.

Table 1: DESEGREGATION STATUS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN 50 LARGEST CITIES, 1970 and 1974

	Percent of enrollment 1974		Percent enrolled in schools attended by 80% or more minority students, 1970		Percent enrolled in schools attended by 80% or more minority students, 1974	
	Black	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic
1. FULL-SCALE DESEGREGATION (17)						
Boston	37.0	8.0	65.1	46.1	19.5	33.2
Denver	18.3	25.8	44.5	24.5	27.3	12.7
Fort Worth	32.9	12.4	80.1	10.5	28.4	30.1
Jacksonville (Duval)	32.6	0.3	57.5	0.0	19.4	0.0
Long Beach	13.1	9.1	0.0	0.0	11.0	3.6
Louisville (city)	54.2	0.3	77.5	4.8	79.5[1]	6.7
Milwaukee	33.0	4.1	76.2	11.6	71.5[1]	23.3
Minneapolis	12.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Nashville	28.8	0.1	67.0	0.0	3.0	0.0
Norfolk	50.9	0.6	55.9	1.8	0.0	0.0
Oklahoma City	28.4	1.6	75.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Omaha	20.4	1.9	64.3	3.0	48.9[1]	0.5
Portland	11.9	1.2	21.3	0.5	10.6	0.8
St. Paul	8.1	3.7	10.8	0.1	0.0	0.0
San Francisco	30.3	14.4	55.5	23.0	27.2	25.6
San Jose	1.6	24.2	10.5	22.0	9.8	21.9
Tampa (Hillsborough)	18.7	6.5	62.9	15.5	0.4	3.8

	Percent of enrollment 1974		Percent enrolled in schools attended by 80% or more minority students, 1970		Percent enrolled in schools attended by 80% or more minority students, 1974	
	Black	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic
2. MODERATELY DESEGREGATED (18)						
Baltimore	72.3	0.8	81.0	0.0	80.0	13.9
Birmingham	63.3	[2]	73.5	0.0	76.9	0.0
Buffalo	43.3	3.2	59.8	12.5	63.9	4.5
Dallas	42.6	12.3	94.1	30.7	75.8	33.9
Detroit	71.8	1.7	79.3	7.6	80.1	9.6
El Paso	3.2	59.0	20.3	64.9	16.9	67.1
Honolulu[3]						
Houston	42.0	35.4	85.4	50.5	80.1	46.6
Kansas City, Mo.	58.2	3.5	83.4	0.0	87.2	12.1
Memphis	70.5	0.6	90.1	6.1	58.1	29.7
Miami (Dade)	26.4	29.6	53.1	37.6	54.6	42.1
New Orleans	79.0	1.6	81.9	7.2	85.2	36.7
Phoenix	9.7	17.0	35.8	33.5	62.1	31.9
San Antonio	16.0	66.7	67.1	74.1	65.2	77.2
San Diego	13.6	11.6	56.3	24.7	46.2	24.9
Seattle	16.3	1.3	25.1	3.7	25.0	4.2
Toledo	29.7	3.6	59.3	3.1	58.9	4.0
Tulsa	16.9	1.0	54.4	0.6	45.4	0.0

	Percent of enrollment 1974		Percent enrolled in schools attended by 80% or more minority students, 1970		Percent enrolled in schools attended by 80% or more minority students, 1974	
	Black	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic
3. ESSENTIALLY SEGREGATED (9)						
Atlanta	84.5	0.2	87.0	0.0	83.0	1.8
Chicago	58.4	12.7	91.8	35.2	94.9	45.9
New York City	38.2	28.4	65.7	69.4	77.0	75.9
Newark	71.9	16.6	91.2	52.9	96.5	76.2
Oakland	66.0	7.9	75.2	45.4	86.7	76.1
Philadelphia	61.7	4.7	80.2	63.2	83.4	59.2
Pittsburgh	43.0	0.1	57.5	4.8	55.0	6.5
Rochester	40.9	7.2	44.2	20.4	44.2	25.1
Washington, D. C.	95.5	0.7	97.0	28.8	97.7	45.0
4. INVOLVED IN LITIGATION (4)						
Cincinnati	50.5	1.7	54.6	2.5	59.8	5.7
Indianapolis	42.7	2.7	60.3	0.8	39.0	1.7
Los Angeles	24.7	27.8	87.1	50.2	83.9	55.5
St. Louis	69.9	0.3	87.9	1.8	94.0	6.3
5. SCHEDULED TO IMPLEMENT (2)						
Cleveland	57.4	2.6	90.0	5.2	91.0	2.0
Columbus	30.7	1.2	53.0	3.3	48.8	7.1

1. Reduced as result of later legal action. 2. Less than one-tenth of one percent. 3. Data not available.

SOURCES: Basic data in *Trends in Black School Segregation, 1970-1974*. Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: Center for National Policy Review, January 1977) and *Trends in Hispanic Segregation, 1970-1974*. Vol II (Washington, D.C.: Center for National Policy Review, January 1977).

Table 1, "Desegregation Status of Public Schools in 50 Largest Cities, 1970 and 1974," summarizes available statistical data relating to these cities. Honolulu is omitted from all the tables because standard sources usually omit its data.

As Table 2 indicates, black children are more widely found in the 49 cities than are Hispanic children. In 34 of the 49 cities, fewer than 11 percent Hispanic children are enrolled. The highest concentrations are in New York City, the West, and Southwest. Among the 49 cities, desegregation is more a "black thing" for demographic reasons. One reason Hispanics in these cities are less interested in desegregation is that their children are far less involved.

Table 2: DISTRIBUTION OF BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS OF 49 LARGEST CITIES

Percentage distribution of students in city schools	Number of cities	
	Black students	Hispanic students
10 or less	4	34
11-30	17	12
31-50	13	1
51-80	13	2
81-100	2	—

Table 3 relates percentage black in the schools of each city to that city's category of desegregation. It shows two principal trends: (1) those cities with middling proportions of blacks are the most desegregated, and (2) more than half the cities whose schools are in the 51-80 percent black range are (or will soon be) fully or moderately desegregated.

Table 3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF BLACK STUDENTS BY CATEGORY OF CITY

Percentage black in city schools	Number of cities				
	Full-scale desegregation	Moderately desegregated	Essentially segregated	In litigation	Preparing to implement order
10 or less	2	2	—	—	—
11-30	9	5	—	2	1
31-50	5	3	3	2	—
51-80	1	7	4	—	1
81-100	—	—	2	—	—
Total	17	17*	9	4	2

*Excluding Honolulu.

Does, however, a high proportion of minority students in a city mean that desegregation is unlikely or impossible? Not if we study the seventeen cities that are fully desegregated. (See Table 1.) Those cities include several that are more than 40 percent minority (Boston,

Denver, Fort Worth, Milwaukee, Norfolk, and San Francisco). On the other hand, at the end of the spectrum, none of the nine essentially segregated cities has fewer than 43 percent minority students. In between these two groups of cities is a third one – "involved in litigation" – which ranges in minority composition from a low of 33.3 percent to a high of 70.2 percent. All four cities in this group may soon join the "full scale desegregation" category.

Cities with Full-Scale Desegregation

These cities include some whose desegregation began as far back as the late 1960s (Norfolk and the Florida cities). The category includes a school district whose busing plan is exemplary (Tampa) as well as one whose plan is poorly designed (San Francisco). One of the cities has been discharged from court supervision (Miami) while another has recently received a new court order to expand desegregation (Minneapolis). Federal appeals courts in two of the cities (Milwaukee and Omaha) are re-examining the desegregation order while the Supreme Court refused to review the plans of two others (Boston and Louisville). Most important, desegregation in all seventeen cities is operating peacefully and, in varying degrees, productively.

Moderately-Desegregated Cities

This category of cities is varied. Nearly all were desegregated by federal court order; one by state court order (San Diego); and two by order of the Office for Civil Rights (Kansas City and Baltimore). More than half the cities are in the South. The moderation of the court orders in the category as a whole does not vary by region. Memphis and Detroit match the excessive modesty of court orders in Texas. Both Portland and Seattle are pressing voluntary methods to the limit.

The category, as a whole, is in a state of flux. In some cases, plaintiffs are pressing in remedy hearings and appeals for more desegregation. This is the case in Buffalo, Dallas, and Detroit. There are parallel pressures in Baltimore, El Paso, and Kansas City. In Seattle, the threat of a lawsuit hangs over the head of the school board.

Essentially Segregated Cities

This category includes three of the five largest cities in the country, as well as four predominantly black cities (Atlanta, Newark, Oakland, and Washington, D.C.). The only one of the twelve already under a desegregation order is Atlanta. In fact, however, the order has changed little in the schools; a metropolitan desegregation lawsuit is pending.

State activity on behalf of desegregation is most evident in this category of cities. In Chicago, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh, state agencies have been applying moderate pressure for student desegregation without success. The three California cities may feel renewed state pressure based on a 1976 state supreme court ruling and newly-adopted state administrative guidelines. New York City has experienced intermittent and insignificant state action; Rochester has not even felt this kind of pressure.

Cities Presently Involved in Litigation

Both Indianapolis and Los Angeles have been found guilty of unlawful segregation. They are now engaged in legal action on the matter of a proper remedy. A federal appeals court has declared St. Louis guilty of deliberate segregation, although a final resolution of the issue will not be made soon. Cincinnati's case has not yet reached a full courtroom hearing. It would be prudent to anticipate that all four cities will be at least moderately desegregated in the near future.

Cities About to Implement Court Order

By fall 1978, both Cleveland and Columbus will be desegregated. One possible complicating factor is an ongoing appeals court review of an aspect of the Cleveland case.

Several observations may be made about the five categories.

First, none of the first three is geographically homogeneous; each contains northern and southern cities. Full-scale desegregation is a major presence in both regions.

Second, the process of categorization is a dynamic one. Cities move from one category to another over time as circumstances change.

Third, the central direction of movement is toward desegregation. Conceivably, a specific city may move away from desegregation, even though a court order once declared it desegregated. (Atlanta is such an example).

Fourth, there is no "typical" large American city (of the top 50) when it comes to desegregation status. Desegregation cannot be said to be a wholly urban or wholly rural phenomenon.

Fifth, virtually all deliberate urban school desegregation has been ordered by a federal court.

Sixth, federal administrative desegregation has been concerned chiefly with a limited number of schools within a large school system. (Baltimore exemplifies this tendency.)

Seventh, none of the cities desegregated as a whole or in part attained this status as a consequence of a state administrative ruling. A state court acted in one case (San Diego).

Dimensions of State Policy

How can the states best relate to large-city desegregation? It may be useful to outline five dimensions of state policy, each corresponding roughly to the five categories of cities. The dimensions can be summarized as follows: (1) maintenance, (2) extension, (3) initiation, (4) intervention, and (5) implementation.

1. Maintenance

Cities which are more or less desegregated need two kinds of help that can be supplied by the state: (1) assistance in avoiding resegregation; and (2) assistance in improving the educational performance of desegregated school systems. These cities are important in themselves but also as models for other cities in the same state and elsewhere.

Avoiding resegregation might entail the encouragement of metropolitan desegregation through state-funded incentives or mandates. State monitoring of desegregated systems could reveal readily any significant trends toward resegregation. State planning studies could pay special attention to the impact of population movements and housing on the racial composition of schools.

Every state's school law contains a policy declaration that each child in the state must be provided an education of some quality. Virtually no state has made this declaration an operative part of the state's educational structure. It remains an idle statutory or constitutional provision. Since the U.S. Supreme Court's *Milliken II* ruling in 1977, the obligation of a state to repair the educational consequences of official segregation is clearer than ever. Plaintiffs in long-dormant cases may be stirred to demand this recently acknowledged right.

2. Extension

Cities in the "moderately desegregated" category also require maintenance services, as indicated above. Their principal resegregation threat, however, is internal; it stems from the incomplete nature of their desegregation. Introduction into a community of "protected" and "unprotected" areas is destructive of the widespread support public schools increasingly require nowadays. Also, educational improvement would seem to have the brightest prospects when it is viewed as a system-wide effort, rather than as a spotty program of compensatory education for certain "deprived" schools.

3. Initiation

Seven of the nine cities in the "essentially segregated" category are located in states (California, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania) which have strong state mandates for school desegregation. The problem here is not so much to find authority as to discover how to use the authority already on the books. Perhaps it would be helpful if the state's role were seen as requiring initial steps toward desegregation that are not just tokens.

States can also heighten their contribution toward desegregation by exploring possible uses of federal power. Illinois, a state with strong statutory support for desegregation, is negotiating an agreement with HEW that in desegregation cases in which both state and federal agencies are concerned, the more stringent requirements of the two authorities will prevail. Iowa, which lacks any mandatory power to order desegregation, has nevertheless creatively used its right to inform federal authorities of possible federal violations in various school districts, including Des Moines.

4. Intervention

Where states are not themselves defendants in a desegregation action, they should petition the court to enter the case as intervenor in support of the plaintiffs. Such an action would establish very clearly the policy position of the state. It would also make available to the court a large body of educational experience, which would be valuable, especially during the remedy phase.

5. Implementation

Cities preparing to implement a court or administrative order need concrete, practical assistance. Financial aid is one form the need takes. Too often, however, this is the sole aid requested. As a matter of fact, a newly desegregating school system is in effect recreating itself. New kinds of schools emerge; children attend certain schools which were off-limits until recently; teachers and building administrators find themselves in new places. Desegregation may be the launching pad for wholesale educational changes that the traditionally segregated school system long resisted.

State assistance is needed for curriculum revision, in-service training for teachers and administrators, and creating new patterns of community involvement in the schools. New currents of thought must invigorate old structures of state supervision. For example, accreditation of schools and teacher-training programs must employ new criteria appropriate to desegregated school systems. This will require a sharp departure from the traditional live-and-let-live relationship between state education departments and big-city school systems.

What of Other American Cities?

This paper has dealt only with the fifty largest cities. What would a similar study of most other American cities show?

Two-thirds of all black students attend school in a school district other than the 100 largest districts. All 50 of our cities are included among those 100. This means that most black students live in middling-size and smaller cities. For Hispanic students this is even

truer. Since desegregation is, as we have seen, more advanced in cities of medium or low concentrations of minority students, the prospect is positive. So-called demographic barriers to desegregation are bound to be less significant in the bulk of cities yet to be desegregated.

State policy should be more manageable in such cities. For one thing, there will already be a number of successfully desegregated school systems of almost any minority concentration. They may serve as starting points for comparison, and, in some cases, as models.

An area of possible state action, which is often overlooked, is the large number of school districts with very small numbers of minority students. To ignore these places is implicitly to believe that desegregation is only a minority "thing." Yet, state laws and regulations are statewide in their reach. A school district without minority students can nevertheless be asked to desegregate its faculties and administrative staffs, and its curriculum. A more racially representative American history course, for example, is a net addition to all history curricula in a state. Recently, a survey in Illinois found that many school districts had no ethnic studies program nor — one may assume — much ethnic content in the regular curriculum. So long as this trend continues, the state is lending support to the idea that the presence of minority students is required before certain state laws and regulations need to be implemented.

A Note on Information Sources

Full information on desegregation of cities and the state role in it is hard to come by.

Federal reporting in this area is seriously deficient. The Office for Civil Rights ceased issuing detailed compilations with release of 1972 data. In January of this year the National Center for Policy Review at Catholic University compiled two slim volumes of 1970-1974 data for the National Institute of Education; they were based on OCR raw data. The volumes are tentative since, as the editors report, a number of the figures are unaudited. (See source note to table 1, above.) The U.S. Office of Education has continued its historic disdain for gathering and publishing data on desegregation.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has been uniquely concerned in reporting on desegregation. (It is noteworthy that virtually none of the standard educational journals review reports — some quite extensive and authoritative — of the Commission. As a result, the ignorance of the educational world is compounded.) But over the years, a good deal of information about the state role has appeared in the Commission's publications, although much of it is

fragmentary. During the past year, the Commission has published a series of twenty-nine case studies of desegregation in separate cities and districts. These, too, have occasional references to the state role.

State reporting is also unsatisfactory. This is especially striking since a number of states now collect current desegregation data by computerized techniques. Virtually none of this is published, at least widely. In any event, there is no mechanism for releasing this information in a standardized form, on a national basis. The recent Stanford Research Institute report on the state role is the first attempt to gain an overall view of the subject but it is understandably light on quantitative data since this was not its primary concern.

Integrateducation magazine is the only private national publication that reports regularly on desegregation in cities and states. This material appears in the section entitled "Chronicle of Race, Sex, and Schools." Occasionally, major attention is paid to the state role in separate articles. The magazine also possesses a valuable file of clippings and other research materials relating to desegregation in every state over the past decade and more. Funds are insufficient to make this information more widely available.

The National Project and Task Force on Desegregation Strategies can make a valuable contribution in the area of information.

A District Desegregates: 1968-1977

School District 151 lies directly south of Chicago. It comprises nearly all-white South Holland and Harvey Highlands as well as virtually all-black Phoenix. In 1968, 151 became the third northern school district ordered to desegregate by a federal court. It was the first northern case filed by the U.S. Department of Justice. After a decade of desegregation, how has 151 been affected?

The customary measures of educational change — achievement and other test scores — are not available for the entire period or even for a major part of it. But even if they were, the effects of desegregation on 151 would still remain more or less unclear. To be sure, educational researchers usually swear by their test results. But they generally ignore two types of factors that also deeply affect the course of desegregation in a community: (1) the level of education prior to desegregation and (2) the continuing community obstacles to educational change under desegregation. In short, both historical and community analysis must be conducted in order to make sense of desegregation.

District 151 consists mainly of the town of South Holland, originally inhabited primarily by Dutch immigrants and their descendants. A second group of more recent residents consisted of Chicagoans who moved to avoid living in residentially integrated areas as the black ghetto expanded. Most were skilled workers, salesmen, and business executives. This influx helped convert South Holland from a farm area into a modern residential suburb. In one five-year period, population increased by 64 percent. It is virtually all-white.

Phoenix, now a town of about 4,000 persons, was populated until the 1920s by poor Poles. During that decade, blacks were brought into the area to work for the nearby Illinois Central railroad. By the close of the decade, Phoenix had become mainly black. Coolidge, the elementary school in Phoenix, became a classically-black school, complete with inferior facilities and textbooks discarded by South Holland's white schools.

During the twenty years before 1967, the school district expanded rapidly. Enrollment grew from 400 to 2,700; four new buildings were constructed, making six in all; and the staff expanded from 16 to 110.[1] In these years of growth, only one school referendum was lost.

1. Oscar M. Chute and others, *Improved Education, Elementary School District #151, Cook County, South Holland, Illinois*, February 27, 1967, p. 1.

As official segregation and planned deprivation for their children grew, the black residents of 151 were increasingly dissatisfied. In 1956, they conducted a boycott of the schools on behalf of integration.[2] The movement subsided but did not disappear. It surfaced again in the early 1960s, in part as a response to the burgeoning civil rights movement in Chicago.

In 1964, voters approved a referendum to build two new schools. One was to be built in a white area, the other next to all-black Coolidge. Blacks protested that only a single new school was needed and that one would inevitably be non-segregated. Both schools were built, however.

Black parents turned immediately to the state superintendent of public instruction with a formal complaint against the segregation of black children and teachers in the Coolidge School. A hearing was held but in 1966 the petition was denied.[3] After a time, an approach was made by parents to the U.S. Department of Justice, under a provision in the 1964 Civil Rights Act that permitted the attorney-general to undertake desegregation lawsuits under certain circumstances.

Meanwhile, school board members grew apprehensive about a possible federal lawsuit. An outside inquiry into the district's educational program to be conducted by Oscar Chute was commissioned. Early in 1967, the Chute report was completed. It pointed to many serious educational shortcomings in the district. Curriculum development efforts were ineffective:[4]

> There is considerable evidence that there is no overall, planned system-wide program of educational offerings considering scope, sequence, articulation and a sound judgment of pupil needs. Rather, the program for the most part, is teacher-determined for each subject as based upon a commercially graded text series and somewhat limited supplementary aids.

Special deficiencies were evident at all-black Coolidge school: "The library room is not equipped for library services and does not have books or instructional material that make it worthy of the name 'library'."[5] Already, warned the Chute team, nearly 30 percent of elementary school age children in the district attended nonpublic schools.[6] The report implied that this trend would be accelerated if an adequate educational program were not created.

The district was very poorly financed. The Chute team warned:[7]

> District #151 citizens are enjoying very low educational fund tax rates for their elementary schools . . . It will be impossible, without redoubled efforts, to secure

2. Story by Henry De Zutter, *Chicago Daily News*, February 24, 1969.
3. Ray Page, *In the Matter of Petition of Certain Residents of School District 151 of South Holland, Complaining of Segregation in the Public School System*, May 26, 1966.
4. Chute and others, *Improved Education*, p. 5.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 6. 6. *Ibid.*, p. 24. 7. *Ibid.*

local, state, and federal funds, to develop a quality educational program for your children . . . The assessed valuation behind each pupil has not changed substantially over the past twenty years . . . The ability of the District to support education has actually deteriorated.

This dismal financial perspective was based more on a reluctance than an inability to supply sufficient funds.

Thus, on the eve of the federal lawsuit, District 151's schools were inadequately financed, their educational program was almost non-existent, and their white enrollment was shrinking as parents sought education of high quality elsewhere. None of these conditions was attributable to desegregation since the district was severely segregated with little or no prospect of desegregation.

In April 1968, the U.S. Department of Justice filed its first northern school desegregation lawsuit. Three months later, the court found District 151 guilty of deliberate racial discrimination. A comprehensive judicial statement on the case was not forthcoming until May 1969.

"In any community where one school is black and one predominantly white," wrote U.S. District Judge Julius J. Hoffman, "nobody needs to be told which is considered the good school."[8] He found ample evidence that teachers and staff were deliberately assigned to schools by race. White children were regularly bused past nearby predominantly black schools on their way to predominantly white schools. Sites for new schools were found to have been selected, in part at least, to increase segregation. Attendance area lines were manipulated by the board of education to permit whites to avoid attendance at predominantly black schools. Judge Hoffman denied that Phoenix constituted an alleged "socioeconomic" unity, setting it aside from South Holland and thus requiring separate education. He also rejected a contention that the school district's poverty relieved the district of its responsibilities under the Fourteenth Amendment.

In the course of the trials, both for a temporary and a permanent injunction, a number of revealing episodes occurred. Principal Eugene Hamilton of the Taft School twice referred in his testimony to "nigger" and "nigger children." The newly-appointed superintendent warned another principal not to testify. The court referred to uncontroverted testimony as to "threatening language used . . . toward an employee . . . who was a witness for the plaintiff . . . ." Numerous erroneous or unsupported projections of financial capacity were made by the central staff.

The initial ruling by Judge Hoffman was handed down on July 8, 1968. Numerous unsuccessful appeals were made. Nearly three years

8. *U.S. v. School District 151 of Cook County, Illinois*, Civil Action No. 68 C 755 in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, May 15, 1969.

later, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to review the case. "I guess this is the end of the road as far as litigation is concerned," said board president Robert Zeilenga. "Now we'll have to make an effort to improve the educational quality of our schools."[9]

Defeat in the courts also spelled failure for certain political moves that had been made on behalf of the school board. In 1968, just two days after a court order had been entered, the Illinois Senate adopted a resolution directing two state officials to intercede in the courts on behalf of the South Holland board of education.[10] In the same period, a study team sent to District 151 by the state superintendent of public instruction reported that initial desegregation measures produced problems that could bring about "social injustice . . . even chaos."[11]

The desegregation court order arrived in a climate of long-term decline in enrollment, falling revenues per child, and sustained failure to establish a high-quality educational program. In addition, attempts to implement desegregation met with continued resistance by many white parents.

A number of these parents withdrew their children in protest and enrolled them in non-public schools. Within a year or so after desegregation, the percentage of school age children attending public schools fell from seventy to fifty. Most transferred to Catholic parochial schools. As enrollment fell, so did state aid which embittered the embattled public school officials. Superintendent Thomas Van Dam appealed in vain to Catholic Schools Superintendent H. Robert Clark. As Van Dam recalled nine years later:[12]

> The private and parochial schools continued to recruit and bleed the South Holland Public School System with requests even coming from the parochial schools for kindergarten children lists so that they could actively recruit these students into their first grade classes . . . No positive action had been taken by the Chicago Archdiocese to stop the bleeding of the school system publicly, even after Father Clark had received printed lists from this district Superintendent showing him the number of students that had transferred out of 151 schools to schools under his jurisdiction.

(Late in 1977, Supt. Clark told a reporter that Catholic schools in 1968 had not accepted students transferring from District 151 in order to avoid desegregation.[13] No mention was made of Van Dam's statement.)

9. *Chicago Tribune*, May 18, 1971.
10. *Integrated Education*, 6 (September-October 1968), p. 7.
11. *Chicago Daily News*, February 24, 1969.
12. Thomas E. Van Dam to Royce Derks, Illinois Office of Education, February 4, 1976, pp. 3-4.
13. *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 7, 1977.

The following table indicates the course of black and white enrollment in the near decade since desegregation:[14]

	WHITE		BLACK	
Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1968-9	1,748	65	816	35
1969-70	1,318	62	804	38
1970-1	1,250	62	764	38
1971-2	1,078	58	784	42
1972-3	994	58	716	42
1973-4	878	56	689	44
1974-5	875	58	631	42
1975-6	803	57	595	43
1976-7	741	57	550	43

During the first three years, 670 whites and 32 blacks left the public schools. In the next six years, enrollment stabilized, largely because of efforts by the school system. The trend has continued into 1977-1978.

Desegregation in District 151 has been hampered by an unyielding financial crisis. As we noted earlier, the district's school tax rate has long been one of the lowest in the region. Repeated efforts to increase the rate have failed. In July 1977, the tenth attempt to do so by referendum failed. Supt. Van Dam, however, has not let the matter rest at the voters' level. For the last few years he and his staff have sought to discover whether industrial and commercial property in South Holland is properly taxed. A two-year investigation revealed that nearly one-quarter of the parcels of property examined were not listed on the tax rolls. This included one building worth $1.5 million. After all the property was placed on the tax assessors' books, the school district's assessed valuation rose by nearly $10 million.[15] Van Dam is now investigating the listing of residential property on the tax assessors' rolls.

The state role in District 151 has been minimal, at best. For one thing, the advent of desegregation was resisted by state school authorities who maintained a strong anti-desegregation stance. Van Dam recalls his early contacts with the state: ". . . constant appeals . . . for consultant help and assistance in the training of teachers and in the preparation of materials to meet the problems that arise with desegregation went unheeded."[16]

Late in 1968, several months after the initial desegregation order, the state superintendent characterized the order as a "complete disregard of the interests and policy of the state." He also declared that the court "in one blow . . . dismissed the entire Illinois govern-

14. Daniel U. Levine and Connie Moore, *Status of School Desegregation in Illinois District 151* (Kansas City, Mo.: Center for the Study of Metropolitan Problems in Education, University of Missouri, December 15, 1976), pp. 9-10.
15. Van Dam to Derks, p. 11. 16. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

mental complex and took upon itself to be the sole deciding voice in what remedies to employ." State Supt. Ray Page warned that the order was producing a financial crisis in District 151 and could also "precipitate a fiscal crisis for the state."[17] Three months later, a regional state director of schools labelled as unfit the upper grade center approved by Judge Hoffman's order. In cross-examination, the official admitted he had written the report at the request of school authorities.[18]

As enrollment dropped, state aid payments shrank accordingly. The school district was forced to seek out new sources of income. Through a whirlwind of grant proposals, designed and written principally by Van Dam, federal funds were obtained. A comparison of 1970 with 1975 shows the resultant change. Percentages of federal, state and local contributions for those two years follow:[19]

Source of funds	1970	1975
Federal	6.8	27.2
State	53.5	25.3
Local-taxes and transfers	35.1	42.8
Local-income, tuition and fees	4.6	4.7

Occasional private grants supplemented these funds.

In this context of insufficient financing, white hostility, and governmental indifference, how did the already shaky educational program fare?

One third of the teachers and staff resigned during the first year. Numerous teachers were hurriedly employed to take their place. Many of these new teachers held provisional certificates. Some of them were members of minorities and had been employed to fulfill the court order's requirement that the faculty be desegregated. Since budget stringencies grew more serious, the new superintendent (Van Dam) – employed six weeks after issuance of the court order and a week before school opened – had no central staff whatever. A preliminary state visitation report, written during these first hectic months, contained the usual complaints of low educational quality.[20]

A more detailed report was released some eight weeks later. "The curriculum development program . . .," it was reported, "may be described as average to below average in quality."[21] A full-time principal was also in charge of district curriculum development. The mathematics report found no inservice workshops, no mathematics reference books for teachers, and two junior high school mathematics

17. *Chicago Daily News*, October 11, 1968.
18. *Chicago Daily News*, January 29, 1969.
19. District 151, *Close-Up on School District 151*, 2 (March 27, 1975), p. 3.
20. David Byrne and others, *Preliminary Visitation Report*, December 17, 1968.
21. Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Visitation Report*, February 11, 1969, p. 1. (This is a quotation from the Curriculum Development Visitation Report, dated December 8, 1968.)

teachers who had not even minored in the subject. During 1970, two separate outside surveys reported a heavy stress on reading instruction throughout the schools.

The black community perceived improved educational opportunities. A black principal of the formerly all-black Coolidge school – now 30 percent black – said desegregation had benefitted his school: "We now have a chorus, an art program, a French course, a library and a full-time librarian."[22] In 1971 the only black member of the school board, Pershing Broome, said: "We've never had quality education until this board took over."[23]

Much, however, remained to be criticized. A survey apparently conducted in 1973, noted "there was little evidence of the principals performing leadership roles with the instructional program."[24] Assistant principals were said to be operating outside any system-wide conception of their role. Once more, it was observed that there was a lack of qualified personnel in the libraries and a dearth of especially-prepared instructional materials. Another survey complimented the district upon its reading program but criticized a resulting imbalance in attention to other curricular areas such as mathematics and the arts.[25]

Only in very recent years have comparative test score data become available. Jongsma conducted a small-scale study of students who read at a level one-and-a-half years or more below the national norm. Her data came from students in grades two to seven and were gathered in 1969 and 1974. Her findings were as follows:[26]

Percentages of Students Reading
At a Level 1½ Years or More Below the National Norm

	1969	1974
White students	31	22
Black students	53	45

A more detailed study was made by Levine and Moore who reported that "considerable progress has been made in developing an effectively individualized program of instruction."[27]

The Levine-Moore study covered the period 1973-1976 and used the test scores of children who had made normal progress during these years. The researchers found that while whites hewed rather closely to national norms, the black students' lag spread from one-half year in second grade to about three years in eighth grade. (The Stanford

22. *Birmingham News*, January 23, 1969 (reprinted from the *Chicago Daily News*).
23. *Chicago Sun-Times*, January 31, 1971.
24. Melvin P. Heller and Max A. Bailey, *School Study. Elementary School District 151. Cook County, South Holland, Illinois.*
25. Theodore Manolakes and John E. McGill, *The Operational Educational Objectives in the South Holland Public Schools. The Report of an Educational Survey Conducted in District 151, South Holland, Illinois* (Chicago: University of Illinois, January, 1974), pp. 4, 7, and 12.
26. Mildred Jongsma, *A Comparative Study of the Percent of Disabled Readers in School District #151 in 1969 and 1974*, March, 1975, p. 2. See also Mildred Jongsma and Lois Wensel to David Armor, April 10, 1975.
27. Levine and Moore, *Status of School Desegregation in Illinois District 151*, p. 5.

Diagnostic Reading Test [SDRT] was used in this phase of the investigation). These data, according to the researchers, "do not suggest that there has been a decline in the performance of black or white students during the past few years."[28] If the district has not slipped backwards, can it also be said to have advanced any? Some very recent findings suggest a tentative answer in the affirmative.

Comparing SDRT scores from 1975 and 1976, Levine and Moore report:[29]

> . . . The percent of white students below grade level declined at every grade level between 1975 and 1976, and in all but grades three and eight percentages fell between 1974 and 1976. The percentage of black students below grade level declined in grades two, three, four and eight with substantial declines registered in the second, third, and eighth grades.

These positive developments are linked by the researchers to the successful use of SCORE, an individualized reading system. They note that SCORE first became fully operational in the district during the 1974-1975 year. Since district officials reported they had stressed SCORE word attack skills rather than other aspects of the system, Levine and Moore analyzed these results: ". . . Recorded word attack performance at each grade level . . . [rose] in 1975-1976 as compared with 1974-1975, and black students appeared to gain as much as in mastery of these skills as did white students."[30] They observe that "student word attack gains were relatively independent of IQ scores and race, thus suggesting that progress is being made toward the goal of improving the performance of low-achieving minority students in desegregated classrooms."[31] Obviously, definitive conclusions based on a single year's findings are unwarranted. (Also, a somewhat more skeptical view of general instructional approaches in district schools was taken by a survey team at about the same time that Levine and Moore made their study.[32])

In 1968, before desegregation, a *Los Angeles Times* reporter visited District 151 and wrote: "So deeply has the poison seeped into individual lives that [white] kindergarten children have been known recently to hurl library books to the floor when they come upon pictures of Negroes."[33] Such community-generated attitudes were put to the test in September when desegregation began. School opened without incident. A local reporter found the children "concerned about things besides whether their classmates were black or white."[34] When, in 1971, the U.S. Supreme Court closed off any further avenue of appeal, Phoenix mayor Al K. Watkins declared:

28. *Ibid.*, p. 79. 29. *Ibid.*, p. 84. 30. *Ibid.*, p. 100. 31. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
32. See Carol Holden, Theodore Manolakes, and John E. McGill, *School Survey and Classroom Inventory Report. South Holland Public Schools, District 151, South Holland, Illinois*, January 22, 1977, pp. 17-18, 22, and 25. For favorable comments by the same team, see esp. p. 13: "It is doubtful that many school systems deal with skill development as carefully as does South Holland."
33. *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1968.
34. *Chicago Tribune*, September 5, 1968.

> There has been no problem with integration. The elementary kids are getting acquainted with each other so when they reach high school age they'll get along. There's been no problem in the schools of whites teaming up against blacks or blacks against whites.[35]

(Watkins' two children were being bused daily to a school in South Holland).

The most systematic studies of student interracial interaction in District 151 were made by Brigitte Erbe between 1973 and 1976. Two dealt with students and one with teachers.

In November 1973, Erbe analyzed attitudes of 632 fifth-eighth graders. A large number of interracial friendships was reported. Age seems an important factor:[36]

> In general, older students view integration less favorably than fifth graders, although this pattern is most pronounced among white students. Much of the change involves a switch from liking integration "very much" to liking it "all right." But there is also a marked increase in white students who do not like integration "too much" or "at all."

Black students perceive their teachers to be more prejudiced than do white students. When asked to rank their teacher's racial fairness, both groups of students responded as follows, in percentages:[37]

	Black	White
Teachers treat black students better	6	18
Teachers treat white students better	29	3
Teachers treat all students alike	65	79

Consistent with numerous similar studies, Erbe thus found a tendency of each group to perceive the other as benefiting from teacher favoritism. On the other hand, a very large part of each group also saw teachers as fair-minded. (No distinction was made between black and white teachers.) In addition, reports Erbe, "a vast majority of students have maintained a healthy self-respect, ranking themselves above the middle of their class in achievement."[38]

Three years later, in October 1976, Erbe visited four schools to study interracial interaction among students. She studied the children at three levels: kindergarten through third grade, fourth-sixth grade, and seventh-eighth grade. Forms of interaction included seating, conversation, and informal contacts. Overall, writes Erbe, "I found the racial climate of the schools . . . excellent. Interaction between white and black students was friendly and always respectful."[39]

35. *Chicago Tribune*, May 9, 1971.
36. Brigitte Mach Erbe, *School District 151 Student Survey* (Chicago: Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois, January, 1974), pp. 3-4.
37. *Ibid.*, Table 6D. 38. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
39. Brigitte Mach Erbe, *The Interracial Climate Among Students in School District 151. A Report of Two Days of Observation of Student Interactions in Coolidge, Madison, Taft and Eisenhower Schools* (Chicago: Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois, November 1, 1976), p. 6.

There were no racially discernible seating patterns in the youngest group; the same was true in the middle group. In the oldest group, however, race was found to have a strong effect: "The number of racially mixed pairs is significantly lower, the number of white and black pairs significantly higher than would be expected by chance."[40] Yet, over a fifth of the pairs in the latter group were racially-mixed. In choosing friends, race played a part among the middle graders, although not decisively. Among the older children, race has become crucial. Erbe explains:[41]

> It is quite likely that this pattern of interracial contact which becomes established at the older grade levels is a direct result of neighborhood segregation. As children get older, they form more permanent ties with their friends, and friendships formed at play in the neighborhood are likely to persist inside the school.

This explanation is consistent with Erbe's finding in the earlier study (see above) that older grade school children were most antagonistic to desegregation. Still, Erbe reports in the 1976 study "I did see white and black students joking and laughing together, especially in the oldest grades."[42]

Late in 1973, Erbe also studied teacher attitudes in District 151. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers responded to a questionnaire. Four out of five believed the quality of education had improved since the inception of desegregation in 1968. At the same time, one-third felt discipline had become harder to maintain over the past few years. On differential expectations, teachers revealed some clear patterns. White students were rated higher than black students on academic ability and effort by white and black teachers. "Although most teachers feel that the same work is expected from white and black children," Erbe writes, "a significant minority (25 percent) believe more is expected from white children."[43] In the light of persistent problems of academic achievement in the district's schools, it is of some interest that teachers tended to place academic skills behind those of creativity, good character, good citizenship, as primary goals of elementary education.[44] Given the strong conviction of teachers that education had benefitted from desegregation, it was somewhat surprising to discover their opinions on whether reversal of the desegregation order would be good for District 151 as a whole:[45]

YES	19 percent
NO	49 percent
DON'T KNOW	32 percent

Erbe was struck by the strong tendency of a minority of teachers either to oppose the desegregation order or to be doubtful of its practical importance.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 3 41. *Ibid.*, p. 6. 42. *Ibid.*
43. Brigitte Mach Erbe, *School District 151, Teachers' Opinions of the School System* (Chicago: Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois, February 24, 1974), p. 4.
44. *Ibid.* 45. *Ibid.*, Table 17.

Small-scale studies by other investigators at two schools generally support the Erbe findings. At Coolidge School, during Fall 1976, Holden and associates found: "Black and white students were working together more frequently, choosing each other for partners in a dance club or for games being played during free time . . . Strict division by race both in and out of the classrooms of Coolidge seemed considerably lessened in this latest survey."[46] A study of Madison School found that over the years, 1972-74, in grades four-six the degree to which white children liked their black classmates increased.[47]

It is common for ability grouping to be widely used in newly-desegregated schools. There are two principal reasons. (1) An effort to provide appropriate learning experiences for a broader range of student abilities and (2) an expectation by administrators that racial segregation will be re-introduced on a classroom level where it has been outlawed on a school-wide basis. This latter motive seems predominant in situations where powerful community opposition to desegregation is expressed. In these cases, it is hoped this opposition can be moderated by demonstrating the slight practical effect of school-wide desegregation where segregation can be salvaged on a classroom basis.

Just three months after implementation of desegregation in 1968, it was reported of Coolidge School that "ability grouping is being carried on with nine sections in each of the seventh and eighth grades."[48] Eight years later, the practice seemed to have decreased considerably: "Very little unnecessary segregative grouping (i.e., other than that necessary for conducting a specific lesson) appears to take place in District 151, in part because gains have been made in individualizing instruction . . ."[49]

How has the larger community of District 151 related to desegregation of the schools?

From the outset, the black people of Phoenix constituted the mainspring of action on behalf of desegregation. (See above, p. 15). In the beginning of desegregation, blacks were offered two alternatives: (1) a black neighborhood school and (2) busing their children into hitherto all-white schools. They chose the latter. Since residential segregation in South Holland and Harvey Highlands has not moderated over the years, blacks in the district live only in Phoenix. The town of Phoenix is at a demographic standstill. Between 1958 and 1977, only fifteen new houses were built there.[50] Residential mobility is very slight. There was thus no basis for a large-scale increase in black enrollment in the schools. In fact, since the 1971-1972 school year, the number of black students has fallen only slightly less than has the number of white students (29.8 and 31.3 percent). During the years 1968-9 to 1971-2, on the other hand, the respective figures were 4.0 and 38.3 percent.

46. Holden, Manolakes, and McGill, *School Survey and Classroom Inventory Report*, p. 9.
47. *Madison School Attitude Survey*, March 1974.
48. Byrne and others, *Preliminary Visitation Report*, p. 3.
49. Levine and Moore, *Status of School Desegregation in Illinois District 151*, p. 12.
50. Mike Klein, "Public Housing Plan Stirs Flap in Impoverished Phoenix," *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 26, 1977.

The white school population of District 151 has declined because of a falling birth rate and withdrawal of students from the public schools. Late in 1970, a survey found the figure had risen to 45 percent; in 1973, it was at 58 percent; four years later it had fallen to 56 percent.[51] Only about one of every twenty black school age children attend non-public schools.

In District 151, therefore, white flight was limited to the first three or so years. After that, enrollment trends of whites and blacks became closely comparable. During these latter years of racial stability, roughly as many whites kept their children in the public schools as sent them elsewhere. Even then, somewhat more than half the non-public school students had been enrolled in these private schools before desegregation.

One spectacular expression of community attitudes on desegregation was the tax referendum. As noted above, between 1968 and 1977, citizens rejected proposed tax increases ten times. Black voters tended to approve the proposed increases while whites were strongly opposed. Nor did white opposition moderate over the years. In July 1977, a tax increase failed by a 3-1 margin. Seven years earlier, the margin had been 2-1 on the occasion of the fifth referendum.[52] Whatever the totality of reasons behind the persistent negative vote, one factor remained obvious – a strong white opposition to desegregation.

Yet, it would be a major error to equate attitudes toward a tax referendum with those toward District 151 schools as such. Many whites who voted against tax increases continued to send their children to the schools. It was probably this parental role more than any other that helped moderate opposition to desegregation among the very people who withheld approval at the polls. Financial pressures were real enough, aside from personal attitudes toward desegregation.

Studies conducted by Erbe in 1973 and 1975 provide a basis for a view of District 151 attitudes on desegregation over a two-year period. Some ninety-four percent of black public school parents favored desegregation while forty-one percent of their white counterparts shared the same view.[53] During the two years, no real change occurred in the views of the two groups. White and black students more closely resembled each others' views than did those of their parents. Two-thirds of the white students and 72 percent of black students liked their own desegregated classes. White students were somewhat more, and black students somewhat less, favorable to desegregation than were their parents.

Certain aspects of the situation become clearer when the two surveys are examined separately.

51. See Brigitte Mach Erbe, *School District 151. How the Citizens View the Schools* (Chicago: Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois, February 25, 1974), pp. 6-7 and Mike Klein, "Quinn Buckner's School Drops Basketball," *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 4, 1977.
52. *Chicago Sun-Times*, January 31, 1971. The actual vote occurred in November 1970.
53. Brigitte Mach Erbe, "Student Attitudes and Behavior in a Desegregated School System," *Integrateducation*, 15 (November-December 1977), p. 124.

In 1973, for example, "52 percent of white parents with public school children approve of desegregation generally, compared to only 39 percent of [white] citizens with no children."[54] Few white or black parents reported their children as having any problems with busing. "On all these questions concerning actual busing, rather than busing as an abstract issue, white and black parents are in complete agreement."[55] The same thing came through in response to a question as to how their children accepted their integrated classrooms. One hundred percent of black parents and 90 percent of white parents reported children accepted them well.

Responses of parents of public school children differed in other respects, however. Following is a selection of these responses, expressed in percentages.[56] ("Don't know" or "undecided" are omitted.)

QUESTION	Black Parents	White Parents
Would prefer my children to go to school with:		
Mostly white children	9	59
Equal numbers of black and whites	83	38
Mostly black children	4	0
Since desegregation the quality of the schools has:		
Declined	6	35
Improved	64	33
Busing is harmful to black and white children	18	60
Teachers are more lenient toward:		
Black children	2	22
White children	30	3

White parents who were most critical of desegregation had a predominant fear of neighborhood deterioration. Since residential segregation had not diminished, the reality of neighborhood change was slight, indeed. Erbe points out that attracting white families with young children was being made difficult by a discriminatory practice of realtors. They usually included a phrase "not located in District 151" in advertisements of specific houses, thereby, in effect, creating doubt about the attractiveness of living within the geographical limits of a desegregated school district.[57] (The 151 school system pressed realtors to drop this practice.)

Erbe's 1975 survey questioned a subsample of the 1,144 respondents of the earlier survey. Respondents were asked again: "How good an education do you feel the children in School District 151 are getting?" Reports Erbe:[58]

> Positive responses . . . for all groups combined . . . improved from 53 percent to 71 percent in 1975, a statistically reliable increase. Even among white private school parents . . . a larger percentage gave good ratings to the public schools in

54. Erbe, *School District 151. How the Citizens View the Schools*, pp. 11-12.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 12. 56. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-31. 57. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
58. Brigitte Mach Erbe, *Attitudes About Desegregated Schools. A Report to the Board of Education of School District #151, South Holland, Illinois* (Chicago: Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois, August, 1975), p. 11.

1975 than in 1973 (62 percent compared to 49 percent). There was also a decline from 35 to 23 percent among white parents who believed the quality of education had decreased since desegregation.

Erbe reported a bottoming-out in the exit of white children from the public schools:[59]

> Of those parents who had children in private schools at the time of the 1975 survey, 18 percent had transferred them from public to private school after first grade. This is a large decrease in actual transfers since the 1973 study, when 45 percent of private school parents said that their children had started out in public school.

Erbe found no reason to expect any unusual amount of residential movement out of the school district. Direct queries elicited answers that suggested to her that the next five years would see a degree of mobility consistent in size with that of the state of Illinois as a whole.

The people of District 151 are interested in the public schools whether or not they have children enrolled. Supt. Van Dam says the schools are packed on open-house evenings as a very broad range of citizens visits the schools. Erbe reports:[60]

> . . . About half the [1975] respondents with no elementary school children at all and 66 percent of the whites with private school children reported having gone to visit the public schools . . . There . . . seems to be a great interest in the public schools, and many citizens are making an effort to find out what is going on there.

It seems fair to say that much of this outpouring is curiosity about the educational programs of the district. The central administration has communicated endlessly with the community about ongoing innovations and the like.

Both in 1973 and 1975, Erbe asked whether respondents were satisfied with the ways the schools were using tax money. In the interim, the degree of satisfaction rose, especially among white parents of public school students.[61] Perhaps a bit wishfully, Erbe even suggests that a referendum for higher taxes might pass if "the threat of lower quality education and the discontinuation of highly valued educational programs actually impended." Overall, Erbe concluded, "the attitude of residents in the school district toward the public schools had become overwhelmingly favorable by 1975, and fears that desegregation would prevent the achievement of a high-quality school system had subsided."[62]

The same point was made in another study. Erbe and Marzolf examined the 1973-1975 data from the viewpoint of attitudes toward busing. They found the perceived quality of education had a great effect on attitudes toward busing:[63]

59. *Ibid.*, p. 34 60. *Ibid.*, p. 65. 61. *Ibid.*, p. 57. 62. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
63. Brigitte Mach Erbe and Charlotte Marzolf, *Busing, Desegregation, and Quality Education: Community Attitudes in a Desegregated School District* (Chicago: Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois, February, 1977), p. 5.

> . . . Among whites who felt the quality of education in the school district had improved greatly since desegregation, 43 percent approved of busing in 1973 and 58 percent in 1975; among those whites who felt the quality of education in the school district had declined greatly since desegregation, only 3 percent approved of busing in 1973, and none in 1975.

Even those respondents opposed to desegregation tended to moderate their opposition when they also believed in high quality schools.

District 151 is one of the most stably desegregated school systems in the country. A falling birth rate has led to the closing of two schools, leaving only four in operation. In February 1976, the racial composition of the remaining schools was as follows, in percentages:[64]

School	White	Black
Eisenhower	52.3	47.7
Madison	58.5	41.5
Taft	68.2	31.8
Coolidge	52.0	48.0
Average	57.7	42.3

Of a total enrollment of 1,366, some 61 percent or 834 were bused. The following table shows the equal distribution of the busing burden between the two racial groups:[65]

	Children Transported:			
	White		Black	
School	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Eisenhower	43	20	173	80
Madison	80	36	140	64
Taft	124	54	106	46
Coolidge	168	100	0	0
Total	415		419	

"More than in almost any school district in the United States," write Levine and Moore, "District 151 educators have been working to solve the 'second generation' problems . . ."[66] In-service training of teachers and staff has been a pervasive concern of the system since the first days of desegregation. Human relations plays a central role in each school. As we have seen, rigid ability grouping has been rejected and other 'second-generation' problems such as discriminatory discipline measures seem not to be important in District 151.

Financial pressures are still critical. Supplies have been cut back, basketball has been eliminated, a preschool program has been cancelled, class size has been allowed to rise further, and special education is being reduced. In 1977, federal funds of over $500,000 flowed into the district. This help is indispensable but it is insufficient to counterbalance falling state aid.[67]

64. Levine and Moore, *Status of School Desegregation in Illinois School District 151*, p. 6.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 7. 66. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
67. Klein, "Quinn Buckner's School Drops Basketball."

In 1971, Supt. Van Dam had complained to state authorities that "we have no community effort for our schools." Rep. Charles W. Clabaugh, chairman of the State School Problems Commission, told Van Dam: "I have sympathy for you but I have absolutely no sympathy with your community. They're putting stubbornness above the welfare of the community." Upon returning to the district, Van Dam wrote Clabaugh that if high quality schools were not created, "you and I are passing the sins of the adults of this community on to the children of this school district."[68] He warned that whites would leave the schools if quality were allowed to drop further and predominantly black schools would result.

Six years after this exchange of views, the schools are stably desegregated and the quality of educational programs seems to be rising. The black community's support is undiminished. Increasing numbers of white parents evaluate their children's public school experiences more positively. This broadening of the range of community support has yet to be translated into a willingness to raise school taxes. But the progress thus far is unmistakable. A vital element in that progress has been the dedicated educational leadership exercised by Supt. Van Dam. (This is all the more striking since Van Dam did not arrive in the district with the reputation of being an integration ideologue, which, indeed, he was not.)

Desegregation in District 151 is significant beyond its own boundaries. In 1971, as quoted above, Phoenix mayor Watkins said "the elementary kids are getting acquainted with each other so when they reach high school age they'll get along" (see p. 22). Six years later, Erbe reported: "Principals in the desegregated high schools to which students from District 151 transfer – claim that they adjust to the high school environment better than students from segregated feeder schools."[69]

At a time when desegregation in the North is spreading, school systems such as District 151 have much to teach. Although it is not a completely ideal model, District 151 has grappled successfully with many critical educational problems. As one of the oldest desegregated districts in the North, it has learned to overcome a long list of powerful obstacles.

Desegregation in District 151 has facilitated educational change. It is probably warranted to say that the schools in the district now serve more children adequately than was the case before desegregation. This conclusion gains strength if one examines the events in District 151 from the viewpoint of historical and community change. In the absence of such a viewpoint, we would be left with a series of short-run statistical studies which could baffle more than enlighten the researcher.

68. *Chicago Sun-Times*, January 31, 1971.
69. Erbe, "Student Attitudes and Behavior in a Desegregated School System," p. 125.

Effects of Parents on Schooling

Homilies abound in this area of interest while solid studies are rare. Just as school administrators and teachers generally view parents as factors external to the task of education, researchers have seen little point in studying the effects of parents on schooling. In very recent years, however, as dissatisfaction with the educational performance of schools has risen, it has become increasingly difficult to ignore the role of parents. One sees them more frequently on the school premises, and not only for purposes of "open house" or other special occasions.

Organized parents are learning to wield political power in order to exert greater parental influence in school affairs. This is especially true in the areas of compensatory education, bilingual education, desegregation, and Indian education. Federal and state statutes and administrative guidelines often require parental participation in various programs. Litigation around this right has grown rapidly in courts on all levels. Little of this activity has yet influenced research.

Indeed, the subject of organized parental action is virtually absent from standard guides to educational research. For the most part, research on parents focuses on their individual relationship to their own children in the home. Or, it is designed simply to discover some inert characteristics of parents – income, occupation, education – in the conviction that such data are important for determining academic achievement. Seldom, however, are parents studied from the viewpoint of their role in the school or in changing the school.

But educational research does yield, however reluctantly, to new currents of interest.

The received wisdom of contemporary educational research assumes a certain fatalism with respect to the home which is viewed as an inert expression of socioeconomic position. Parents who are poor are expected, by virtue of poverty, to provide a less favorable learning climate for the child. Thus, the school's failure to educate poor children is frequently ascribed to parental poverty. Two recent studies are of interest in this regard.

Since 1968, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) has been conducting a project entitled "Disadvantaged Children and their First School Experiences." (See the *Research Review*, 1, pp. 9-11.) Recently, study director Virginia Shipman and associates dealt, among other things, with parents in families of varying degrees of poverty and

their roles in the academic success of their children. In one report, relating to a study of 103 black, low SES third-graders, the researchers found a firm pattern: "The most common picture that emerged for those children who showed the most gain in academic achievement was the . . . continuing warm and stimulating classroom environment combined with a home environment that provided the child emotional support in general and support for school activities in particular."[1] It was also found that positive home influences were strengthened by participating mothers who received information and emotional support from the schools. "In response to greater acceptance [by the school]," writes Shipman, the mother "participated more; and from such participation there appeared to develop an increased sense of efficacy and optimism with greater awareness and use of community resources to meet family needs."[2]

The ETS researchers learned that a family's help to its children depends on more than beneficent interactions between parent and child. As Shipman puts it, "cognitive gains are likely to be largest and to be substantial when there is [also] support in the total ecology of the child . . . in adequate health care, nutrition, housing, and general family support."[3] Thus, cautions Shipman, "parent-to-child or teacher-to-child models appear too simplistic for characterization of minority children's achievement behaviors."[4]

In a related report on the ETS project, Shipman and associates interviewed 1,375 mothers during Year 6 of the project; 71 percent of the mothers were black. The pitfalls of viewing the role of the family solely through its social status were emphasized: "Even though family status remains relatively constant over a number of years, the way in which the family operates within the environment may change considerably."[5] Residential mobility of the family and father absence, two factors dearly beloved by many educational researchers and educators as explanations of low achievement by poor students, were found to be almost unrelated to the academic achievement of children in the project.

The economic conditions of inner-city families in the study had deteriorated over six years; yet, the achievement of their children had not declined. At the same time, economic support to impoverished families seemed to help set the stage for educational improvement of their children. Precisely how this influence works out is not known. It is surely worth further investigation. Shipman observes the need among the children of impoverished families in the project for extensive community services: "Despite the low representation in the study sample of those in the most impoverished circumstances, a

1. Virginia S. Shipman and others, *Notable Early Characteristics of High and Low Achieving Black Low-SES Children* (Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, December 1976), p. 38.
2. *Ibid.* 3. *Ibid.*, p. 52. 4. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
5. Virginia C. Shipman, *Stability and Change in Family Status, Situational, and Process Variables and their Relationship to Children's Cognitive Performance* (based on a paper of March 1977 to the Society for Research in Child Development), p. 14.

considerable-sized minority of mothers reported that: (1) their child had not been to a doctor since entering grade school [the children were now third graders]; (2) they had no friends; and (3) their child had a problem which was of serious concern."[6]

In another study, David Armor and associates studied, among other things, the role of parents in aiding schools to implement successful reading programs. Between 1972 and 1975, poor black and Mexican-American sixth-grade students in twenty elementary schools in Los Angeles showed significant increases in reading scores. (See *Research Review of Equal Education*, 1, pp. 8-9.) To what degree could any of the success be attributed to parent action influence?

"In black neighborhoods," reported Armor, "the more vigorous were the schools' efforts to involve parents and community in school decision making, the better did sixth grade students in those schools fare in reading attainment."[7] It is noteworthy that Armor places the emphasis in this respect on school initiative. But he also found that mere parental presence in the school played a constructive role:[8]

> We examined whether the individual students whose parents met with the teacher had improved reading scores; they did not. Parents visiting in classrooms apparently affect students as a group; this finding contributes to our belief that parent visits reflect the *atmosphere* of a classroom.

Still to be explored are the specific mechanisms whereby the atmosphere is communicated to the children.

The degree of community involvement, Armor found, was very low in the areas in which the twenty schools were located. This extended to participation in reading programs, as well. The level of income and residential stability gave no clue to the degree of community involvement. One finding was perplexing: "For black schools, levels of parent involvement appear to relate rather closely to student reading gains . . . No such relationship appears in the Mexican American subsample."[9] One possible explanation – not mentioned by Armor – is that the schools in Los Angeles are especially resistant to Mexican American parental influence. Another is that Mexican American parents may not be focusing their interest on the improvement of reading so much as on bilingual instruction.

Several studies have examined the role of parents in desegregated schools. While this was not a major interest of Willis Hawley, the matter was touched on in his study of 2,142 fifth-grade students in seventy-nine classrooms in North Carolina. He found that "parental support for school . . . accounts for just under 10 percent of the

6. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
7. David Armor and others, *Analysis of the School Preferred Reading Program in Selected Los Angeles Minority Schools* (Santa Monica, California: Rand, August 1976), p. vi.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 25. 9. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

variance in students' reported interest in achievement."[10] This is a modest factor but not to be ignored. Of considerable interest is Hawley's finding that "for the students in this study, the relationship between parental education and parental support for achievement in school is very weak."[11] This finding contradicts a very widely-held conviction to the contrary. It bears further exploration.

During 1975-1977, the System Development Corporation evaluated the operations of the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA). Annual reports on a national scale were written by John Coulson while Jean Wellisch reported on a sample of twenty-four elementary schools. In the report for 1976, Coulson wrote that "parent involvement can apparently be beneficial to student achievement, when those parents are present in the classrooms as paid instructional aides, volunteers, or visitors."[12] One of the conditions found to be important in the more successful programs was that "parents were more heavily involved in the classroom . . ."[13] For whatever reason, Coulson's report on the third year of the ESAA evaluation does not mention the role of parents.

In the first of her two in-depth studies, Wellisch found the parent role to be of considerable importance. "In the ESAA in-depth schools, the key elements of success in both reading and math achievement included: (1) parent participation in the classroom; (2) the use of objectives; and (3) relatively high per-pupil costs of remedial specialists."[14] In analyzing the relative contribution of various factors in predicting reading and mathematics achievement, Wellisch ranked "parent involvement in the classroom" as second (for reading) or third (for mathematics) among five or seven factors. Indeed, with respect to prediction of reading achievement, parent involvement was more important than "per pupil costs for remedial reading specialists."[15]

Wellisch stresses that by parent involvement she does not mean just any school-related activity:[16]

> Two features of the relation of parent involvement to achievement should be underlined: first, that involvement in the *classroom*, rather than in the school in general, is related to academic success; second, that *parent* involvement specifically, and not the use of instructional aides in general, is associated with school success in the in-depth study.

Further, she specifies it is "the use of paid parent aides in the classroom" that matters rather than the use of paid outsiders.[17]

Wellisch detected still other parental effects. In schools where parent visitors were reported by principals to be racially representative

10. Willis D. Hawley, *Teachers, Classrooms, and the Effects of School Desegregation on Effort in School: A "Second Generation" Study* (Durham, North Carolina: Center for Policy Analysis, Institute of Policy Sciences and Public Affairs, Duke University, April 1976), p. 17.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
12. John E. Coulson, *National Evaluation of the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA): Summary of the Second-Year Studies* (Santa Monica, California: System Development Corporation, July 1976), p. 20. 13. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
14. Jean B. Wellisch and others, *An In-Depth Study of Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) Schools: 1974-1975* (Santa Monica, California: System Development Corporation, July 1976), p. VIII - 11.
15. *Ibid.*, p. VIII - 8. 16. *Ibid.*, p. IX - 9 17. *Ibid.*, p. VI - 15.

of the school as a whole, two conditions were noticeable: (1) multi-ethnic materials were used more frequently and (2) improved student-teacher interaction was reported by students.[18] Wellisch offers no explanation. Plausibly, one could argue that the presence of minority parents in force, so to speak, exerts a positive influence on teachers and other school staff in the direction of racial fairness.

It is puzzling to note that in her second-year report, Wellisch does not mention the role of parents. Whether this omission means no parental effects were detected is unknown.

In the Forehand-Ragosta-Rock study of desegregated schools, the subject of parental effects was barely touched on, and then only cryptically.[19] An experienced official with a federal agency deeply involved in desegregation implementation writes: "One basic problem that occurs in practically every community that must desegregate its schools is the failure of the school administration to thoroughly inform parents of what is to take place."[20] In the three years since this statement was made, the problem has probably eased because of the rise of organized citizen participation in desegregation planning. A detailed account of a black parent's futile efforts to probe into low black student achievement in the Madison, Wisconsin schools suggests the persistence of administrative resistance to parental inquiry.[21]

The advent in 1971 of limited administrative decentralization in Los Angeles introduced citizens advisory councils into the school system. Jenkins studied their operation from July 1972 to October 1974. Principals, she found, saw the councils as potential competitors for authority in the school. More generally she discovered:[22]

> Administrative professionalism, expertise, and experience are considered the overriding criteria for access to decision making, regardless of the qualifications or the socioeconomic status of persons in the school's community. Of thirty-seven principals interviewed, only three mentioned that they would allow increased community involvement in decision making if the parents were intelligent and knowledgeable.

Intelligence without professional credentials was thus insufficient preparation although in other areas of our society – such as voting – one without the other is quite commendable.

During 1976, the Citizens' Management Review Committee (CMRC) evaluated administrative decentralization in the Los Angeles schools. They conducted 223 interviews at individual schools during the spring of the year and an undetermined number at area offices

18. *Ibid.*, p. VII - 15.
19. See Garlie A. Forehand, Marjorie Ragosta, and Donald A. Rock, *Conditions and Processes of Effective School Desegregation* (Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, July 1976), pp. 100, 114, and 169.
20. Ben Holman, "Desegregation and the Community Relations Service," *Integrateducation*, 13 (January-February 1975), p. 27.
21. See Dorothy H. Holden, "Academic Achievement of Black Students: A Black Parent's View," *Integrateducation*, 14 (July-August 1976), p. 39-43.
22. Jeanne Kohl Jenkins, "Advisory Councils and Principals in Los Angeles," *Integrateducation*, 14 (January-February 1976), p. 28.

during the last two months of the preceding year. "Parents generally," reports a CMRC subcommittee, "want significantly greater involvement in personnel, budget, and program decisions than they currently have or than teachers or principals want them to have."[23]

It is very clear to all concerned just who makes decisions regarding single schools. The following table summarizes how four types of respondents perceive the principal decision-maker.[24]

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT WHO MAKES MOST OF THE DECISIONS, BY PERCENT RESPONDENT:

Decision Makers	Principal	Teacher	CAC Chairman	Parent	Average
Principal	25	36	32	40	33
Teachers	27	20	9	20	19
Parents	4	5	5	4	5
District and Area Offices	0	0	4	0	1
Students	2	2	0	0	1
No response	0	0	11	2	3
Combination of decision makers	43	38	39	35	39

Principals and teachers are the most frequently-cited individual decision-making groups. There is virtual identical perception by all of the weakness of parents in decision-making roles.

The parties concerned differ sharply when it comes to prescribing the desired extent of CAC involvement in four areas of decision-making: (1) goals, (2) program, (3) budget, and (4) personnel. Here is a listing of views by four groups: (1) principals, (2) teachers, (3) CAC presidents, and (4) parents.[25]

DESIRED EXTENT OF CAC INVOLVEMENT, BY PERCENT

Respondent	Goals	Program	Budget	Personnel
Principals				
More	73	57	46	18
Less	2	14	27	52
Teachers				
More	46	50	48	21
Less	21	18	21	54
CAC Presidents				
More	79	77	79	54
Less	4	7	5	32
Parents				
More	78	73	67	47
Less	7	11	13	32

(Some pairs equal less than 100 because of lack of responses in some cases.)

23. Citizens' Management Review Committee, Decentralization Subcommittee, *Decentralization in the Los Angeles Unified School District: An Appraisal* (Los Angeles: CMRC, June 1977), p. 17. 24. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Clearly, principals and teachers resist an increased citizen voice most in areas of "business", that is, budget and personnel and, less so, in program. Parents, on the other hand, (1) favor a strong parental voice in all four areas of interest but (2) are less united in the area of personnel than in the other three areas.

The CMRC subcommittee found a great reluctance on the part of school board members and central staff administrators to delegate any significant degree of authority to lower administrative levels. It also singled out "the apparent ambiguity of authority relationships between different levels of the system" as its most consistent finding.[26] On the lowest administrative level, the principal – whose authority over budgets appears to local people as decisive – turns out to have only marginal control.

Studies of parental effects tend to emphasize the unrealized educational potential of schools and thus do not share the prevailing research view of the school as an inert, passive educational factor. Clearly, if parents did not feel dissatisfied with the schools, they would have little reason to seek to change them. Yet, the schools, by and large, do not appear eager to change. To call upon parents to become more involved in their children's education while denying them meaningful avenues of institutional participation is to preclude any real change from occurring.

Shipman reports on the basis of her six-year study:[27]

> The majority of parents in the present sample say that most teachers in their child's school do not understand community needs. Also, although a number of parents visited their child's school and assisted with extracurricular activities, very few had been involved in discussions of the curriculum their child studied. A substantial number of families could appear to require concerted outreach efforts from the schools; 19 percent of the mothers did not know the name of their child's teachers.

Educationally adequate schools would thus seem to require a readiness to acknowledge their own shortcomings and a consequent need to change.

In the absence of sufficient research, numerous attractive-sounding proposals have been made to improve education of poor and minority children by manipulation of parents. Frequently, such approaches are based on the overly-simplistic idea that the quality of education offered by entire school systems can be raised by inducing individual parents to adopt a firm resolve that they will enforce better study habits by their children. This assumes that parents are presently not sufficiently concerned and also that any shortcomings of the schools themselves are incidental obstacles or even irrelevant to educational improvement.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
27. Shipman, *Stability and Change*, p. 25.

Recently, Rev. Jesse Jackson has formulated a program of educational improvement known as "Excel."[28] It shares the basic outlook sketched in the preceding paragraph. "Contracts" are signed between student, parent, and school whereby parents agree to enforce strict study standards at home. The school's signature does not commit it to any program of internal change, thus furthering the idea that widespread educational failure is an individual responsibility. The Los Angeles school board has agreed to budget $400,000 to finance the first year's "Excel" program.

"Excel" shares the view, so popular among educators since the early 1960s, that failing students who are poor or of minority origin are lacking certain qualities necessary to academic success. In this case, a lack of parental concern is the quality highlighted. While, of course, parental cooperation with the school is desirable, the research reviewed above suggests that schools generally do not welcome such cooperation except in narrowly-defined terms. In areas such as teachers, budget, and program, increased parental cooperation is resisted. It will be of interest to see whether "Excel" can succeed in the face of such institutional resistance to change.

28. See *PUSH for Excellence* (Chicago: Operation PUSH, 1977); Jesse L. Jackson, "A Plan to Nourish Roots," *Los Angeles Times*, May 23, 1977; Jesse Jackson, "PUSH for Excellence," *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 25, 1976; Jesse L. Jackson, "Encouraging Learning," *Chicago Tribune*, November 7, 1976 (letter); Jesse L. Jackson, " 'Give the People a Vision'," *New York Times Magazine*, April 18, 1976; and Eugene E. Eubanks and Daniel U. Levine, "The PUSH Program for Excellence in Big-City Schools, " *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 1977, pp. 383-88.

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